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Financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

Budget performance for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Initial appropriation for 2016/17[a]	$268,624,600
Expenditure for 2016/17	$279,867,300
Unencumbered balance for 2016/17	$57,300
Appropriation for 2017/18	$266,700,000
Projected expenditure for 2017/18[b]	$266,700,000
Projected underexpenditure for 2017/18	$0.0
Proposal submitted by the Secretary-General for 2018/19	$271,115,600
Adjustment recommended by the Advisory Committee for 2018/19	($1,757,500)
Recommendation of the Advisory Committee for 2018/19	$269,358,100

[a] Total resources available for 2016/17 amounted to $279,624,600, comprising approved resources in the amount of $268,624,600 gross ($267,763,975 net) and resources authorized under commitment authority in the amount of $11,300,000 gross.
[b] Estimates at 31 January 2018.

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I. Introduction

1. During its consideration of the financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 14 March 2018. The documents reviewed and those used for background by the Committee are listed at the end of the present report. The comments and recommendations of the Committee on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations, including those pertaining to the findings and recommendations of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017, can be found in its related report (A/72/789). The main observations and recommendations of the Board pertaining specifically to UNISFA are discussed in paragraphs 4 to 7 below.

II. Budget performance report for the period from 1 Juiy 2016 to 30 June 2017

2. By its resolution 70/269, the General Assembly appropriated an amount of $268,624,600 gross ($267,763,975 net) for the maintenance of UNISFA for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017. Subsequently, the General Assembly, in its resolution 71/298, authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount not to exceed $11,300,000 for the period from 1 July 2016 to 31 June 2017, in addition to the $268,624,600 previously approved by the General Assembly, leading to a total amount of $279,924,600 (gross) of resources available during the same period. Expenditures for the period totalled $279,867,300 gross ($277,479,900 net), reflecting a budget implementation rate of almost 100 per cent. The Advisory Committee notes that actual expenditures incurred in 2016/17 totalled $279,867,300 against the total resources made available in the amount of $279,924,600 (comprising the initial appropriation of $268,624,600 gross and the commitment authority of $11,300,00), resulting in an unused balance of $57,300 and a net additional requirement of $11,242,700 to be appropriated by Member States (see para. 30 below). A detailed analysis of variances is provided in section IV of the report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of the mission for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/644).

3. The budget performance report indicates that, during the 2016/17 period, a total amount of $3,273,800 was redeployed from group III, operational costs, to group I, military and police personnel, to cover the costs related mainly to the lower actual average vacancy rate of 13.9 per cent for military contingents compared with the budgeted rate of 19 per cent. In addition, an amount of $820,600 was redeployed from group III, operational costs, to group II, civilian personnel, to cover the costs related to the increase in the salary scale of national staff and the lower actual average vacancy rate of 14 per cent for national General Service staff compared with the budgeted rate of 20 per cent. The redeployment from group III, operational costs, was possible owing mainly to lower expenditures on facilities and infrastructure and air operations (see A/72/644, paras. 47). The comments of the Advisory Committee on the information presented in the performance report on individual objects of expenditure can be found, where relevant, in the discussion of the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/730) in section IV below.

4. In considering the reports of the Secretary-General on the financing of UNISFA, the Advisory Committee also had before it the report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts of the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2017 (A/72/5 (Vol. II), chap. II). In its report, the Board made observations

and recommendations pertaining to the mission on the following matters: (a) completed airport not used (ibid., paras. 499–501; see also para. 5 below); (b) fuel consumption (ibid., paras. 370–373); (c) inadequate segregation of duties in Umoja (ibid., paras. 423–426); (d) waste prevention and disposal (ibid., paras. 430 and 432); and (e) absence of emergency evacuation after dark (ibid., paras. 457–459).

5. With regard to the completed but unused airport, the Board of Auditors indicates that UNISFA spent about $7.5 million for construction of an airport, taxiways and apron at Athony in Abyei. Despite its completion on 13 December 2015, the airport has never been used, as the project had started before clearance was received from the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan, and clearance has still not been granted. According to the Board, such clearance should have been requested and obtained prior to the use of the land claimed for construction of camps and other premises. The Board recommends that the mission liaise with the Government of the Sudan to allow usage of the Athony airfield. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed by the mission that all civil works have been completed and that the overall project is approximately 99 per cent complete. According to the information provided by the Secretariat, no maintenance costs are being incurred or budgeted, since the airstrip is not operational.

6. In terms of fuel consumption, the Board of Auditors indicates that the mission's fuel consumption guideline sets the standard of fuel consumption for each vehicle category and provides a tolerance rate of 20 per cent above standard consumption for each vehicle category. The Board found that fuel consumption for the United Nations vehicles and the contingent-owned equipment vehicles exceeded the tolerable rate of 20 per cent; the actual rates of over-consumption were 39 per cent and 32 per cent respectively. The Board further indicated that despite such variances, the mission had not taken adequate measures to investigate and monitor excessive fuel consumption as required by the standard operating procedures on fuel. The Board recommended that UNISFA enhance coordination between its self-accounting units to closely follow-up and investigate excessive fuel consumption of mission vehicles, as per the requirements of the standard operating procedures, and review and use the CarLog data to improve fuel management.

7. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the recommendations of the Board of Auditors will be implemented expeditiously.**

III. Information on performance for the current period

8. With respect to current and projected expenditures for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 31 January 2018, expenditures amounted to $182,432,000. At the end of the current financial period, the estimated total expenditures would equal the appropriation of $266,700,000, resulting in a projected full utilization of the approved budget.

9. The Advisory Committee was provided with information on the incumbency of UNISFA military and civilian personnel as at 31 January 2018 as follows:

Category of personnel	*Posts authorized approved 2017/18[a]*	*Posts encumbered*	*Vacancy rate (percentage)*
Military and police personnel			
Military observers	225	98	56.4
Military contingent personnel	5 101[b]	4 401	13.7
United Nations police	50	39	22.0

Category of personnel	*Posts authorized/approved 2017/18*[a]	*Posts encumbered*	*Vacancy rate (percentage)*
Civilian personnel			
Posts			
International staff	160	140	12.5
National Professional Officers	3	3	0.0
National General Service staff	86	77	10.5
General temporary assistance			
International staff	1	–	100.0
United Nations Volunteers	33	32	3.0
Government-provided personnel	–	–	–

[a] Represents the highest authorized strength for military and police personnel and the number of approved posts for civilian personnel.

[b] By its resolution 2352 (2017) of 15 May 2017, the Security Council decreased the authorized troop ceiling of the mission from 5,101 to 4,791 military contingent personnel. The change was not reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on the budget for UNISFA for 2017/18 (A/71/767), owing to the timing of the decision by the Security Council, which was subsequent to the submission of the report.

10. The Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 31 January 2018, a total of $1,882,871,000 had been assessed on Member States in respect of the mission since its inception. Payments received as at the same date amounted to $1,797,472,000, leaving an outstanding balance of $85,399,000. As at 12 February 2018, the cash available to the mission amounted to $73,814,000, which is sufficient to cover the three-month operating reserve of $39,166,000 (excluding reimbursements to troop- and police-contributing countries).

11. The Advisory Committee was also informed that, as at 31 January 2018, payments totalling $58,746,000 had been made during the year 2017 for troop costs up to 31 August 2017. As at 31 December 2017, the amount owed for contingent-owned equipment was $11,566,000. With regard to death and disability compensation, as at 31 January 2018, an amount of $1,108,387 had been paid to settle 45 claims since the inception of the mission; payment for 12 claims was pending. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the outstanding claims will be settled expeditiously.**

IV. Proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019

A. Mandate and planning assumptions

12. The mandate of UNISFA was established by the Security Council in its resolution 1990 (2011). The mission is mandated to assist the Council in achieving an overall objective, namely, to support the implementation of the Agreement of 20 June 2011 between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, and to provide support to the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism in creating a safe and demilitarized border zone. By its resolution 2386 (2017), the Council extended the mandate of the mission until 15 May 2018 and decided that the mission's authorized troop ceiling would decrease from 4,791 personnel to 4,235 personnel on 15 April 2018, unless it decides to extend the mandate of UNISFA related to the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. It is understood that the Council would consider renewing the mandate related to the

Mechanism, should the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan adhere to specific measures agreed to in May and October 2017 (see resolution 2386 (2017), paras. 3 and 9).

13. The planning assumptions and mission support initiatives of the mission for the 2018/19 period are summarized in paragraphs 9 to 23 of the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed budget for UNISFA (A/72/730). The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the proposed budget provides for the continuing presence of the artillery and tank units, for which a commitment authority was requested in 2016/17 (see para. 2 above), but does not take into account the potential decrease of the authorized troop ceiling from 4,791 to 4,235 military contingent personnel. **The Advisory Committee trusts that, should the Security Council decide not to renew the UNISFA mandate related to the Joint Border Verification Monitoring Mechanism, the Secretary-General will review the requirements of UNISFA, if needed, and present a revised budget for the requirements of the mission, as appropriate.**

B. Resource requirements

14. The proposed budget for UNISFA for the 2018/19 period amounts to $271,115,600, representing an increase of $4,415,600, or 1.7 per cent, compared with the appropriation for the 2017/18 period. This reflects the combined effect of proposed increases under military and police personnel, and civilian personnel ($3,329,500, or 2.2 per cent, and $7,296,200, or 25.7 per cent, respectively), partially offset by a proposed decrease under operational costs ($6,210,100, or 7.1 per cent). Detailed information on the financial resources proposed and an analysis of variances is provided in sections II and III of the proposed budget (A/72/730).

1. Military and police personnel

Category	*Authorized 2017/18*[a]	*Authorized 2018/19*	*Variance*
Military observers	225	225	–
Military contingent personnel	5 101	4 566[b]	(535)
United Nations police	50	50	–
Formed police unit personnel	–	–	–

[a] Represents the highest level of authorized strength.

[b] By its resolution 2352 (2017), of 15 May 2017, the Security Council decreased the mission's authorized troop ceiling of the mission from 5,101 to 4,791 military contingent personnel. The change was not reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on the budget for UNISFA for 2017/18 (A/71/767), owing to the timing of the decision by the Security Council, which was subsequent to the submission of the report.

15. The proposed resources for military and police personnel for 2018/19 amount to $154,018,200, reflecting an increase of $3,329,500, or 2.2 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2017/18. The increase is mostly due to: (a) lower estimated deductions for the non-deployment, delayed deployment or deployment of non-functional contingent-owned equipment against troop reimbursement costs under military contingents; (b) higher rations requirements due to an increase in the unit cost for reserve packs under military contingents and; (c) a lower delayed deployment factor for the United Nations police of 22 per cent compared with the 50 per cent applied in the current period. The increase would be partly offset by the reduced requirements for mission subsistence allowance due to the lower projected deployment of staff officers (A/72/730, paras. 83–85).

16. **The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for military and police personnel.**

2. Civilian personnel

Category	*Approved 2017/18*	*Proposed 2018/19*	*Variance*
Posts			
International staff	160	161	1
National Professional Officers	3	3	–
National General Service	86	86	–
Temporary positions			
International staff	1	1	–
United Nations Volunteers	33	33	–
Total	**283**	**284**	**1**

17. The proposed resources for civilian personnel for 2018/19 amount to $35,662,800, reflecting an increase of $7,296,200, or 25.7 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2017/18. The Secretary-General indicates that the increase is mainly attributable to increased requirements under: (a) international staff ($6,808,000, or 28.1 per cent), owing to a lower vacancy rate of 15 per cent compared with the 23.6 per cent applied 2017/18, and to increased requirements for common staff costs; (b) national staff ($324,800, or 13.2 per cent), owing to a lower vacancy rate of 10 per cent compared with the 15 per cent applied in 2017/18; and (c) United Nations Volunteers ($154,800, or 10.2 per cent) owing to higher costs for settling-in grants, pre-departure expenses and repatriation expenses due to the increased personnel movements anticipated in the 2018/19 period.

Vacancy rates and vacant posts

18. The proposal includes vacancy rates for civilian personnel for the 2018/19 period, set out in section II.D of the budget document (A/72/730), as follows: 15 per cent for international staff; 0 per cent for National Professional Officers; 10 per cent for national General Service staff; 6 per cent for United Nations Volunteers and 15 per cent for international temporary positions.

19. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with information on the posts which have been vacant for more than two years. They comprise two international posts at the P-3 level and four national General Service posts. Concerning their recruitment status, the Secretary-General indicates that one national General Service post is proposed for reassignment and one international (P-3) post is the recruitment process, while no recruitment action has been taken for the four other posts (1 P-3 and 3 national General Service staff). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the four posts be abolished. Any operational cost should be adjusted accordingly.**

Recommendations on posts and positions

20. A total of 284 civilian posts and positions are proposed for the 2018/19 period, comprising 161 international posts, 89 national staff posts, 33 United Nations Volunteers and 1 international position funded under general temporary assistance. The staffing proposal reflects a net increase of one post compared with the approved posts and positions for the 2017/18 period, which is related to the proposed establishment of one post of Chief of Operations and Resource Management (P-5), to

head the new Operations and Resource Management Section as part of the restructuring of the mission support component around three pillars (operations and resource management, service delivery and supply chain management). In this context, it is also proposed that one post of Contract Management Officer (P-3) from the Contract Management Unit be reclassified as an Acquisition Planning Officer (P-4), and reassigned to the new Acquisition Management Unit. The proposed changes also include 25 redeployments and 7 reassignments (a full list of the proposed staffing changes for 2018/19 is presented in the annex to the present report).

21. **Subject to its recommendation in paragraph 19 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for civilian staff. The Committee's observations and recommendations on mission support structures are contained in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/72/789).**

3. Operational costs

(United States dollars)

	Apportioned 2017/18	*Proposed 2018/19*	*Variance*
Operational costs	87 644 700	81 434 600	(6 210 100)

22. The proposed resources for operational costs for 2018/19 amount to $81,434,600, reflecting a decrease of $6,210,100, or 7.1 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2017/18. The Secretary-General proposes decreases mostly under the following classes of expenditure: other supplies, services and equipment ($5,594,400, or 21.9 per cent); air operations ($1,155,700, or 4.8 per cent); communications and information technology ($661,100, or 7.9 per cent); and ground transportation ($181,300, or 10.7 per cent). The decreased requirements would be offset in part by increases mainly under facilities and infrastructure ($1,049,700, or 4.1 per cent) and consultants and consulting services ($328,500, or 212.3 per cent).

Facilities and infrastructure

23. The increased requirements of $1,049,700 under facilities and infrastructure is mostly attributable to: (a) higher maintenance services costs due to the outsourcing of camp management services following the finalization of a two-year commercial contract ($1,462,000); (b) higher petrol, oil and lubricants requirements due to the higher estimated cost of generator fuel of $0.75 per litre applied in 2018/19 compared with the $0.66 per litre applied in 2017/18 ($1,460,400); and (c) higher security services requirements due to the proposed implementation of a surveillance system in the Amiet market ($885,600). The increased requirements are offset partially by lower construction, alteration and major maintenance requirements (see A/72/730, para. 90).

24. With regard to the proposed outsourcing of the camp management services, the Advisory Committee was informed that in 2016/17, the underexpenditures under maintenance services, amounting to $5,106,000, were attributable to the cancellation of the award of the contract for maintenance services due to restrictions, including the non-issuance of visas to the selected company (see A/72/644, para. 57). Upon enquiry, the Committee was also informed that the mission resorted to ad hoc alternatives such as the hiring of individual contractors. Despite the setback in 2016/17, a new contract relating to the outsourcing of camp management services in 2018/19 was negotiated and finalized at an additional cost of $1,462,000. **While not fully convinced that the proposed increase for the maintenance services is justified, the Advisory Committee considers that the decision to outsource**

maintenance services should be accompanied by reduced requirements under other budget lines. The Committee recommends that the proposed increase of $1,462,000 for maintenance services be offset by similar reductions under other budget lines.

Official travel

25. An amount of $1,086,000 is proposed for official travel in 2018/19, representing an increase of $13,200 compared with the apportionment for the 2017/18 period. The Advisory Committee notes that the supplementary information often reflects a wide range of costs for a specific destination, and that the proposed requirements also include an amount of $16,800 for attendance at the Committee hearing, when such hearings could take place by means of videoconference or combined with other official meetings at United Nations Headquarters. **The Advisory Committee considers that the proposed resource increase for official travel is not fully justified and recommends that the requirements for official travel in the 2018/19 be kept at the level approved for the 2016/17 period.**

26. **Subject to its recommendations contained in paragraphs 19, 24 and 25 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for operational costs.**

Other matters

Environmental issues

27. As mentioned in paragraph 4 above, the Board of Auditors has identified waste management as an area of improvement for UNISFA. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that during the 2018/19 period, the mission plans to: (a) improve its water systems and its management of wastewater and to build safe garbage and solid-waste disposal sites with gradual segregation of recyclable and biodegradable solid waste materials; (b) establish hazardous-waste storage and treatment facilities at 15 sites; and (c) enhance the greening of its camps by adding 6,000 trees to the 500 trees already planted. With regard to energy generation, the Secretary-General indicates that the mission uses 126 generators, consuming 5.4 million litres of fuel, to cover almost all its electric needs. In addition, a total of 420 solar lights would be installed by the end of the 2018/19 period (see A/72/730, paras. 19 and 35). The Advisory Committee recalls that the establishment of a Chief Environmental Officer, (P-4) post was approved for the 2017/2018 period, (together with a United Nations Volunteer position), whose tasks include the coordination, formulation, implementation and monitoring of environmental policies; the provision of training to staff and advice to senior management on environmental issues (see A/71/836/Add.13, para. 28). **In view of the additional resources already approved, the Advisory Committee trusts that the mission will implement its environmental projects without delay and renew its effort to minimize its environmental footprint, including through the use of renewable energy.**

Vehicle ratios

28. In its previous report, the Advisory Committee recommended that the mission adjust its vehicle holdings in compliance with the standard vehicle ratios (A/71/836/Add.13, paras. 47–49). The Advisory Committee notes that the supplementary information indicates that, while the number of light passenger vehicles would decrease from 259 in the current period to 196 in 2018/19, most of the vehicle holdings per category of personnel would still remain above the standard ratios. **The Advisory Committee reiterates that UNISFA should make concerted**

efforts to adjust vehicles holdings in order to ensure alignment with the prescribed standard vehicle ratios (see A/71/836/Add.13, paras. 47 and 49).

Gender balance

29. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the mission's proportion of female staff is 19 per cent among international staff and 9 per cent among national staff. **The Advisory Committee encourages UNISFA to renew its efforts to increase the representation of women among its staff.**

V. Conclusion

30. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of UNISFA for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 are indicated in section VI of the performance report (A/72/644). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly:**

(a) **Appropriate an additional amount of $11,242,700 to the Special Account for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017, authorized by the General Assembly under the terms of its resolution 71/298;**

(b) **Apply other income in respect of the same financial period in the total amount of $8,505,300, from investment revenue ($799,000), other/miscellaneous revenue ($35,100) and cancellation of prior-period obligations ($7,671,200), against the shortfall in assessment for the same period;**

(c) **Assess the additional amount of $2,737,400, representing the difference between the increase in appropriation ($11,242,700) and other revenue ($8,505,300) for the same period.**

31. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of UNISFA for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 are indicated in section IV of the proposed budget (A/72/730). **Taking into account its recommendations in paragraphs 19, 24 and 25 above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed resources be reduced by $1,757,500 from $271,115,600 to $269,358,100. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly appropriate the amount of $269,358,100 for the maintenance of UNISFA for the 12-month period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.**

Documentation

- Report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of UNISFA for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/644)
- Report of the Secretary-General on the budget for UNISFA for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/730)
- Report of the Board of Auditors on United Nations peacekeeping operations for the 12-month period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/5 (Vol. II), chap. II)
- Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2017 (A/72/756)

- Report of the Secretary-General on the overview of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations: budget performance for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 and budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/770)
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 for UNISFA (A/71/836/Add.13)
- General Assembly resolution 71/298
- Security Council resolutions 2352 (2017) and 2386 (2017)

Annex

Summary of proposed changes in the budget for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019

	Posts
International staff	+ 1
National staff	–
United Nations Volunteer — international	–
General temporary assistance — international	–
Total	**+ 1**
Establishment	+ 1
Abolishment	–
Redeployment	25
Reassignment	7
Reassignment/reclassification	1
Conversion	–
No change/realignment	108
Total	**+ 1**